



MEDIA RELEASE

STATE OF TENNESSEE
DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENT AND CONSERVATION

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CONTACT: TISHA CALABRESE-BENTON
(865) 594-5442

Environment and Conservation Offers Tips for a Greener Holiday *Resolve to Create Less Waste in 2009*

NASHVILLE - Americans throw away up to 25 percent more trash between Thanksgiving and New Year's Day than at any other time of the year, but with some simple tips, you can make your holidays green, and save some money.

"From giving environmentally friendly gifts to composting Christmas trees when the holiday celebration is over, there are a host of simple steps we can take to reduce waste without sacrificing tradition," said Environment and Conservation Commissioner Jim Fyke. "These tips reflect ways we can celebrate the holidays and still treat the earth with kindness."

10 TIPS FOR A GREENER HOLIDAY AND NEW YEAR

Travel Efficiently: Whether it's for holiday shopping or a trip to visit family, take public transportation, carpool or map your route for the greatest efficiency and least amount of fuel consumption.

Pass on Paper: From invitations to holiday meals, take a pass on paper products. There are numerous free Internet resources to send electronic invitations and greeting cards. Set the mood by setting the holiday table with reusable dinnerware, silverware and cloth napkins. Or for casual gatherings, try serving finger foods that don't require a plate or fork.

Buy Local: Buying local for your special meals is good for the economy, reduces fuel usage and adds a special touch. In addition to seasonal vegetables at your local farmer's market, Tennessee is home to numerous specialty items like hams, baked goods and cheeses. Learn more at www.picktnproducts.org.

Decorate Smart: LED holiday lights can save you up to 80 percent over traditional incandescent. Put them on a timer to be sure they don't stay on longer than planned.

Energy Star: Look for the Energy Star rating for your electronic gifts, and your gift will keep giving throughout the year with greater energy efficiency. And don't forget to recycle the old electronics to keep them out of landfills.

Give the Great Outdoors: Watchable wildlife make great gift ideas. Consider bird feeders, bat houses and butterfly boxes paired with a book on the same subject.

Make Memories, Not Waste: Consider activities like cooking school, canoe trips or tennis lessons for gifts. Or give a Tennessee State Parks gift certificate by visiting www.tnstateparks.com and clicking on the "winter promotion" link.

Extend the Useful Life of Gifts: Before tossing the old to make room for the new, check to see if you can donate, reuse or recycle it.

(MORE)

Wrap it Up: Make your own wrapping paper out of newspaper, children's artwork or other reusable or recyclable items. Most store-bought wrapping paper is not recyclable and ends up in landfills.

Create Your Own Heirlooms: Frame family documents or children's artwork, or attach brass plaques to special items such as cribs.

Environment and Conservation encourages you to communicate these green holiday tips with family, friends and co-workers by sharing the following link: www.tn.gov/environment/ea/pdf/greentips.pdf.

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